

The Honorable Joe Donnelly
House of Representatives
1530 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Congressman Donnelly:

Thank you for your letter regarding the VIM Recycling, Inc. in Elkhart, Indiana. I share your concerns about this site and assure you that my staff is working very hard to address them.

As you know, U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) is overseeing implementation of an Administrative Consent Order (ACO) on this site, which is expected to be completed by year end. The completion of the activities stipulated in the ACO will address the open burning and smoke issues from the "C Pile."

In addition, EPA worked with Indiana Department of Environmental Management (IDEM), Elkhart County, and Baugo Township officials to develop a contingency plan in the event of an emergency during the project. My staff has been and will continue to visit the site several times weekly to ensure compliance with the ACO. In addition, my staff is making weekly visits to the Elkhart County Landfill to ensure proper disposal of the removed waste.

I sincerely appreciate the fact that your staff visited the site, viewed the removal activities first-hand, and met with EPA and IDEM staff overseeing field activities. As your staff witnessed, this operation inevitably involves emissions of steam, smoke and odors as hot waste material is excavated, screened and loaded into trucks. In response to your staff's recommendations during their visit on July 30th, EPA developed the attached Fact Sheet explaining the project and distributed over 300 copies in the surrounding community on August 8th.

I assure you that my staff will remain vigilant in ensuring compliance with the ACO and actively engaged in dealing with any issues that may arise over the upcoming months. Finally, my staff continues to coordinate and offer technical assistance to IDEM on the long term plan for this site once removal of the "C Pile" is completed.

If you have any further questions, please contact me or your staff may contact Mary Canavan or Ronna Beckmann, the Region 5 congressional liaisons, at (312)886-3000.

Sincerely,

Bharat Mathur
Acting Regional Administrator

Attachment

DRAFT